



# use your head, wear a helmet

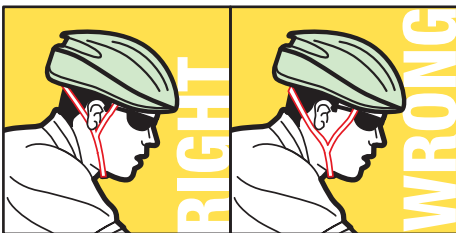
## How to Correctly Wear a Helmet: Snug, Level and Low



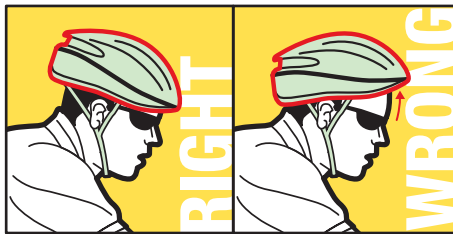
Your helmet cannot protect what it does not cover. If your helmet does not fit snugly on your head, or if it tips back (leaving your forehead exposed), it can slide or fall off in a crash — and you are twice as likely to suffer a head injury.

It is important to have the helmet fitted, adjusted and fastened appropriately. We call it — **SNUG, LEVEL and LOW.**

**SNUG.** Choose a helmet that fits snugly all around your head and use the inside pads to adjust for fit and comfort. Your front and rear straps should form a “Y” just below your ear. Your straps should be pulled tightly but comfortably up against your skin (able to slide a finger under the strap.)



**LEVEL.** Your helmet should be level, not tilted forward or backward or move from one side to the other. Take a look in the mirror or ask a friend or family member to check that it is level.



**LOW.** Your helmet should sit squarely on your head with the front of the helmet low on the forehead, just above your eyebrows.

**Now for the test.** Check your helmet fit by looking in a mirror. Gently rotate the helmet on your head, front to back and side to side, noticing the skin in your brow area. If the fit is comfortable, and the skin moves with the helmet, you have a proper fit.

### OTHER HELMET FACTS

Due to the speeds involved, riders of motorized scooters should wear a helmet designed for a motorcycle, according to the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends helmets, knee pads and elbow pads when riding scooters.

Roller blade helmets and bicycle helmets are designed to meet the same ASTM\* standards. Recreational roller skaters and roller bladers should also wear wrist braces, and knee pads.

\*ASTM: American Society for Testing and Materials

# snug level

# low

# bicycle helmet

## quick questions

## quick answers

### ABOUT MULTI-SPORT HELMETS

**What is the difference between bicycle helmets and multi-sport helmets?**

Multi-sport helmets are designed for multiple impacts as found in skateboarding and trick or free-style skating, and are of a different design and construction. The outer shell is ABS plastic like football and hockey helmets, hard so it spreads the impact.

Bicycle helmets are only good for one impact. It doesn't matter how much you paid! One crash and the helmet needs to be replaced.

According to the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, look for a sticker that says ASTM F-1492 or Snell-94, when buying a helmet for skateboarding or radical styles of skating.



**The Helmet Education Pilot is a Project of Traffic Safe Communities Network (TSCN) in Santa Clara County**

Agencies Participating in the Pilot:  
Los Altos Police Department, Milpitas BPAC, Morgan Hill BPAC, Palo Alto BPAC, Palo Alto Transportation Division, San Jose BPAC, San Jose Department of Transportation, San Jose Police Department, Santa Clara County Public Health Department, Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Trauma Services, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, Stanford University Medical Center Trauma Center, Sunnyvale BPAC, Sunnyvale Public Safety Department, Walk San Jose.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, with support from the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition.

### Who Should Wear A Helmet?

ANYONE WITH A BRAIN. You wear a seat belt when you're in a car, right? Think of a helmet as a seat belt for your brain. It's easy, cheap and smart. If that's not enough, California law requires anyone under age 18 to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle, scooter, skateboard or skates. Of course, everyone over 18 should wear one too.

### Where Can I Buy A Helmet?

YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOP will have the best selection. Check the yellow pages or the web. Many department stores also carry helmets. Never buy a used helmet.

### What Features Should I Look For?

Make sure it has been tested and approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). This is usually indicated by a "CPSC" sticker in the helmet. All helmets with CPSC stickers are approved. Also consider options such as a visor to block the sun, or an attachment for a rear tail light.

### How Much Should I Pay For A Helmet?

Functional helmets can be found for AS LITTLE AS \$20 — a small price to pay to protect your brain. Fancier helmets are lighter, include more features and include more vents to keep your head cool. Of course, the more features, the higher the cost.

### What Size Helmet Should I Wear?

Helmets fit heads which are measured in inches/cm. Some kids fit in large size and some adults wear small or medium size. Also, select a helmet that fits your head now, not one you will grow into.

### How Should A Helmet Fit?

Helmets must be SNUG, BUCKLED, WITH NO SLACK IN THE STRAPS. Wear your helmet level, NOT TILTED BACK! A helmet that is too loose or tilted back will not provide adequate protection from a head injury. Some models have different sizes for better fit. If you buy a one size-fits-all helmet, be sure to buy some inexpensive foam inserts to properly adjust size and fit the helmet to your head.

### When Should I Replace My Helmet?

Replace your helmet AFTER A FALL OR CRASH that causes an impact to the helmet, even if you don't see any cracks or dents. If your helmet hasn't been in a fall or crash, you should still replace it EVERY 3-5 years. Over time, sunlight and regular usage both weaken the helmet. The more you use it, or the more you leave your helmet in the sun, the sooner you should replace it.

#### SOURCES OF PRODUCT STANDARDS

CPSC: Consumer Product Safety Commission

Snell: The Snell Memorial Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to research, education, testing and development of helmet safety standards.

ASTM: American Society for Testing and Materials. ASTM International is one of the largest voluntary standards development organizations in the world.

# level

# snug

# OW